

CIA blamed for Vietnam crisis

STATINTL

By our own Reporter

Mr Bob Edwards (Lab. Bilston), said yesterday that it was time the US Government curbed the "adventurers" of the Central Intelligence Agency, whom he blamed for the Vietnam crisis, and time also that "a British Labour Government showed some Socialist initiative in the world."

Mr Edwards was one of the speakers at a rally in Trafalgar Square organised by the Movement for Colonial Freedom. During the rally repeated demands were made for the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam and for British initiative in reconvening the Geneva conference which produced a settlement in 1954.

We were told, said Mr Edwards, that the war in Vietnam was to protect Western democracy, but the Vietnamese had had ten governments in recent years and had not had a chance to vote for any of them because all were military dictatorships.

"The reason why this dreadful war continues is that the American Central Intelligence Agency, which is responsible to no one, not even the American President, decided that the rice fields of Southern Asia and the oil wells of Burma should always be kept under the control of the West," he said.

Other speakers criticised Downing Street almost as vigorously as the White House. Mr Jim Mortimer of the Draughtsmen and Allied Technicians Association said it was incredible that in Britain, a Labour Government was unable to make the same demand (for negotiations) that had already come from France.

Failed

Lord Brockway, by contrast, did not doubt that in recent weeks Mr Wilson had used his influence with both the American and Russian Governments in an effort to achieve peace, but it was now clear that that influence had failed so far as Washington was concerned. He appealed to the Prime Minister to say openly that this war should end and that negotiations should begin.

The Reverend Donald Soper said that though he supported Mr Wilson's administration he was very sorry that the Foreign Secretary had suggested that before you could have negotiations the communists would have to be persuaded to stop infiltrating.